

## [John M. Hardeman]

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[?] [?] [?] - [?] [?] [lore?] Folkstuff - Range lore

Gauthier. Sheldon F.

Rangelore.

Tarrant co., Dist., #7 [68?]

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John M. Hardeman, 71, living at 618 Court St, Fort Worth, Texas, was born Aug. 2, 1867, in Robertson co., Texas, on a ranch. His father, John H. Hardeman, engaged in the cattle business for a livelihood. The family moved to Williamson co., in 1876 and located near Round Rock. John H. Hardeman established a cattle ranch located between Round Rock and Taylorville(now Taylor) He bought a track of land for the sum of \$2. per acre. The first of the Hardeman family [came?] to Texas, in 1835. They were John H. Hardeman and Tom J. Baily Hardeman. John H. located in Washington co., and J. Baily settled in [Matagorde?] co. Tom J. Baily Hardeman was one of the signers of the Texas declaration of Independence, and was a member of Pres. Dave Burnet's cabinate. The county of Hardeman, Texas, was named in his honor. John M. Hardeman began his range career on his father's range and has continued in the cattle business to some extent every since. He now operates a stock ranch located near Justin, Texas.

His story of range life fellows:

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"I was born in Robertson co., Texas, in 1867, at my father's farm and ranch. [My?] father was John H. Hardeman, and a brother of Tom J. Baily Hardeman. They came to Texas, in 1835. My [father?] settled [in?] Washington co[.,?] and Tom J. Baily Hardeman settled in [Matagorde?] co. Tom was one of the signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Each of these men [fought?] for the Independence of Texas. Tom J. Baily Hardeman was a member of Burnet's cabinate. Therefore, I amy state that I am a true son of Lone Stare State.

"I am thinking of [my?] boyhood days and my mind wanders back to Taylorville(now Taylor) Williamson co., Texas. It was 61 years ago the 2, of last Aug., when I, with my father and the rest of our family rolled into Williamson co., from Robertson co., and there located. C12 - 2/11 - /21 2 We settled near Round Rock, at which place he bought a tract of land for the sum of \$2. per acer. On this tract, he built a log house and put into cultivation a small patch of [land?] to raise crops for our home use. Cattle raising was father's main business.

"The country was a vast prairie with no fences, no farms and not many buildings, except along the creeks. Settlers located along the creeks where they could obtain poles for rails with which to build fence around their patch of cultivated land. Also, so they could have water supply. Wire for fencing purpose had not yet been invented, and it was necessary to locate near timber if one desired to cultivate any land, because cattle ranged where the grass was sufficient and a supply of water was at hand.

"The country was an open range with cow camps located at many points, with thousands of longhorns feeding on the tall grass which grew profusely on the prairie, and in the creek bottoms.

Jim and Frank [Stales?] had a camp where the Stiles' [home?] is now located. Jay [Olive?] had a cow camp located on Longbranch a few miles S.W. of Stiles' camp.

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"The morning we arrived in Williamson co., we saw a tremendous[?] smoke arising South of the I& G.N. Railroad. We inquired about the cause of this smoke, and were informed it was caused by the burning of Jay Olive's cow camp, and that Jay Olive had been killed. He was killed in a fight proceeding the burning of the camp. This fight was the ending of a feud between the Olive boys and the Smiths. Each side had a large following. The Smith boys were Tom, Meg, and Bill. [TYhe?] Olive boys were Print, Ira, Bob and Jay. 3 There [was?] also, a Tom Smith, who married the Olive's sister. He went by the name of Olive Tom Smith, and the other Tom went by the name of Tom Curly Smith. Curly Tom Smith was the leader of the Smith crowd. He had a magnificent [physeque?]. One can't expect to see a more, [perfect?] one. He was about six feet tall and weighed about 180 pounds. He had curly auburn hair, blond mustache and blue eyes. He was an excellent rider and roper, a near perfect shot with a six-gun and a graceful-dancer. This fellow was a typical leader of men. I think Jay Olive was the leader of the Olive crowd and a genuine leader too. The feud ended in a draw as near as I could reckon the out come. The feud was [responsible?] for the death of several men and about an equal number on each side.

"The feud started over a question of cattle and range rights. Basing my conclusions on the statements made by members of each side of the controversy, I must state each side were equally wrong.

"During the succeeding years after my arrival in Williamson co., I learned to know the Smiths and Olives. I became very fond of these people. I learned they were straight folks and a true friend. If they were your friends you could [depend?] on them remaining with you through thick and thin. We lived as neighbors and I never have had better neighbors or friends.

" John "Buffalo" Olive was drowned in Spark's range trying to drive cattle out of Brushy creek. John "Alligator" Olive was our sheriff at one time. He was waylaid and died from

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the gun wounds, but killed several of his assultants single handed. Mob olive, 4 Alligator's brother, is still living near Beaukiss.

"There was not much to Taylorville, when we first settled in the territory. It was just a small community of settlers. I shall try and tell about the first people there and their activities.

"I don't remember whether it was Strayhorn or Milt Tucker that was sheriff in '76, but the sheriffs were in the order I shall name them. They were Simpson Connell, Bill [Br okshire?], John T. Olive, Henry Paul and a man named Edwards. Of course, I refer to the early period of Williamson co.

"The first hotel [opened?] was the [Waggoner?] Hotel. A little later Square Napier put in a hotel, followed by a hotel established by Camp and Kroshosky, and others. J.B. Simmons was the first Postmaster. Montgronery and Jones opened the first lumberyard. Wiley and Post opened the first General store, then followed the stores of J. P. Vance, [George?] [Milton?] and others. A man named [Person?] put in the first [blacksmith?] shop. The first school was taught by Mrs Fisher, and the school was held in her residence. John McMurr opened a school later, and it was this school I attended. My class mates were Dave and Bill Sloan, Osi [Basley?], one of the Wilcox boys, Dave [Mc carty?] and Dave Taylor. Of all my school mates McCarty and Taylor are the only men still living in Taylorville(now Taylor). The first saddler was J.CCannon. He was followed by Pete Gobel. Our first boot maker was A.Disang and later Jack [Kanie?] established a boot shop. Taylorville's first doctors were Drs Morris, [Tredgill?] and Brown. Our first lawyers were John W.Parker, Manton and Briggs. Judge Scott was the first justice of the Peace. Jim 5 Sledge open the [sirs?] saloon, then Joe Bennett, Mark and Henry Bradford opened places.

"While telling about the first people who settled in Taylorville, [I?] want to mention some of the prominent settlers. Those along the Gabriel River were [?] Talberts, [Perkins?], Wilcox, early, Sloans, [S?] Smith, Logan, Hayslip, Eubanks, Sterns, McFadden, and the most noted man was Marion(Polcat) Williams. The name was well applied. One [Brushy?] Creek

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were McCatchen, Avery, Bryant, Criss, Patterson, Flyn, Darlington and the Slaughter family. [Those?] first settlers were hoss and cow men and later came sheep men.

"I don't want to forget to mention the first musical [organization?], and among the first of such organizations in the country during the early '80s and prior thereto. This organization was the Taylorville, String band. The members were John and Jim Fink, John Burk and [Bill?] [Reed?]. This musical organization furnished [music?] for all the important events, and were in great demand to furnish music for all the big dances held in the territory for many miles away.

"Now, that I have mentioned some of the first settlers in town and country, I shall tell how we earned our livelihood and conducted ourselves.

"In some ways life was hard. A six-gun was a prominent part of a man's dress. Everyone wore his gun and the guns were used many times. If a man did not want to swap shots, he had better throw his gun away and stay out of arguments. One the other hand friends were true and stood with each other till the very [last?] in any fifficulty. 6 "Sheriffs run for office on their reputation for being a gun fighter and [rough?]. In fact, such men were required in the office.

The first person killed in Taylorville, after we moved to Williamson co., was a constable named [McDonnell?]. The shooting took place in George Hilton's store. George was away at the time attending court at Cameron, and his [Brother?], Tom, was attending to the business in George's absence. Mc Donnell had a reputation for being tough. This reputation caused people to elect him to office. One night McDonnell rode up to Hiltons store and ordered him to close, because, as 'he said, it was closing time. Tom refused, staring it was too early. McDonnell [started?] to ride his mount into the store for the purpose of inforcing his order. Tom ordered McDonnell to stay out, but he continued to drive his hoss in. Tom pulled his gun, so did the officer. Shots were swapped and MCDonnell was shot first. He fell off of his hoss dead.

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"The next killing was [committed?] by Jack Napier. He was a cattle driver and while passing a settler's home with a herd of cattle, he stopped to get a drink of buttermilk. The son of the settler and Jack became involved in an argument over some trifling question. They settled the argument, the was arguments were frequently settled those days, by using guns. Jack was the quickest with the draw and the young lad lost the argument.

Thinking of the gun fights those days, brings to my mind an exciting time in Taylorville, and give a true picture of the conditions the law enforcement officials were compelled to deal 7 "Dan Moody, father of ex- Governor Moody, was/ Mayoraat the time I shall [ention?]. Tom Smith was city marshal. Tom was never known to [back?] away [from?] a fight. He was elected to the office by the good people of Taylorville, [because?] he had earned this reputation by actual deeds in the Smith-Olive feud, as well as in other fights. John Olive was sheriff, and the constable was a man names Barwise. The deputy constable [was?] a man named [Morris?].

"Ed Rosoux [had?] opened a saloon in the town and he too had a reputation for running his business as he reckoned it should be operated. He was well educated and [polished?] and had an imposing [personality?].

"One of the principles Rosoux followed in running his saloon, was to not allow any [?] intoxicated person to be taken out of his place of business. He insisted on taking care to them whom became [drunk?] while in his saloon.

"Mayor Moody had issued a warrant for the arrest of a man on some misdemeanor complaint. The warrant was [placed?] in the hands of deputy [ constable?] Morris to execute. Morris entered the [salon?] and lead his [prisoner?] outside before Rosoux noticed what was taking place. Rosoux realized what had happened about the time the two men were in the street and he went into action. He [stept?] outside and demanded that the deputy turn the prisoner loose and allow the fellow to return to the barroom, Morris refused to comply [with?] the demand. Wothout any further words, Rosoux acted quickly.

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He hit the deputy on the [point?] of the jaw 8 knocking the man into the ditch where the deputy remained unconscious for a few moments. Rosoux then took the prisoner back into the saloon.

"When Rosoux's action was reported to the Mayor he issued a warrant promptly, for Rosoux's arrest. Tom Smith [served?] the warrant on Rousoux, but let him go at liberty on [Rosous'swown?] recognizance. The trial was called in Mayor Moody's court and Rosoux was [present?].

"The city attorney presented the city's evidence and then the Mayor called for the defendant to present his evidence and defense.

"Rousoux arose to his feet and made a short speach to the court [which?] was as [follows?]. 'So far as this [damn?] kangaroo court is concerned, it canngo to hell,[?] He then [walked?] out of the court and back to his [saloon?].

"Rosouz's action toward the court [just?] heaped oil on the fire. A battle was [certain?] to follow if any [further?] action would be taken against Rosoux, but the officals could not let the matter drop without each of them resigning their office. There was a citation issued for [Rosoux?] to appear instanter and answer to a charge of contempt of court. Of course, he was found guilty on the charge of assult and battery and interfering with an officer, when he walked out of the court. Therefore, folks looked for plenty of action. Tom Smith was given the paper to serve and bring the prisoner to jail. 9 " Rosoux had the reputation of being one of the best shots in the State, and there was no doubt about his courage. Tom Smith had an equal reputation. Therefore, the people waited in [anticipation?] of seeing a high class gun fight.

"Tom Smith went to Rosoux's place of business and when he entered Rosoux was playingg a game of pool. He walked over to the pool table and told Rosoux he desired to talk to him. [?] I have no objection to you talking. Start your story,' Rosoux told Smith.

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Smith told Rosoux, in substance, that he had gotten matters badly messed up and suggested that Rosoux come along and see if the situation could not be adjusted.

"I am not going with you or anyone to satisfy that bunch of [kaggroo?] court jokes,' was Rosoux's reply.

"I advise you to do so,' Smith pleaded. "'Because, its things like this that leads to gun play.

"When I get ready to pop my gun you shall know it, and if you don't stop molesting me it will not be long till you will hear from me"

"I am ready now[!]"? Smith answered, and drew his gun. Smith fired a shot quickly [which?] some what surprised Rosoux. The bullet entered Rosoux's side, but he leaped over the bar quick as a flash and drew his gun. He dropped to the floor before he could fire a shot, and died a short time afterwards.

"The friends of Rosoux, and he had many, disapproved of the way Smith shot him. They [asserted?] there was no need to kill the 10 man, that Smith had Rosoux covered and could have compelled him to go along to jail. The feeling which existed among the prople resulted in Smith's defeat at the next election. The defeat rankled in Smith's mind, and he would slur Johnson, the new marshal, when ever an opportunity wastcame his way. Smith drank liquor occasionally, and when he had a few drinks he would prade the street taunting the marshal by refering to him as the 'yellow marshal.'

"There came a day when Smith must have drank more liquor than usual, because he became obnoxious. Smith, on this day, praded the street [calling?] for Willis Johnson, and saying that Johnson was yellow and afraid to arrest him. He was yelling so loud that he was heard from one to the other of the street. This conduction on the party of Smith [forced?] Willis Johnson to take some action. He called on Mayor Moody for a warrant charging Smith with disturbing the peace.



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"The Mayor did not issue a warrant, because he wanted to prevent a gun battle. He was certain there would be a gun fight if Johnson served the warrant, and it would put the yellow mark on Johnson to have some other officer serve it.

"A large number of people had gathered at the town's square, waiting for the arrest and the anticipated battle to take place. Mayor Moody disappointed the crowd by appearing himself and announcing that he had refused to issue a warrant. He sated his purpose in refusing the warrant, was to allow Smith full rein to show the folks [?] the town what a damn fool he could make of himself. 11 This move on the part of Moody, caused Smith to realize what a fool he was making of himself. He went home and thereafter remained quite about Willis Johnson.

"During the late '70s and early '80s, a bunch of tough fellows would frequently ride into the small towns and force the business houses to close. They did this for the sport they received out of their act. A tough [gang?] rode into Taylorville one night in '79, and had closed all the business places but Tom Bishop's store. Tom met the gang at his door and shooting started immediately. Tom killed three of the men, [but?] was killed himself.

"These shootings I have related are some of the many of like incidents which took place, and were things we had to expect at any time.

" Now, let me tell how we worked. I have mentioned the [fact?] that the country was an open range [dotted?] with cow camps. The cattle were attended to by a sort of [cooperated?] system. That is to say, when a range rider found a critter needing attention, he [?] would attend to it regardless of its brand. [While?] a herd would graze more or less in the vicinity where their water and salt [licks?] were, there was always more or less strays finding their [wpay?] [i?] to a strange herd. Thus, what strays were found in our herd we gave to same attention as we [rendered?] our own. The other ranchers did the same thing for our strays.

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"Ordinarily, we did [no?] herding to hold the cattle in a certain location. However, during threatening weather or while a storm was in progress, there were riders kept on hand and ready in the 12 event the herd would start to drift.

"Our territory was a prairie country without sheltering places. Therefore, the cattle would start drifting before or during a storm hunting for shelter. A herd of longhorns was an excellent barometer. When a [sever?] storm was brewing, we could tell it was on the way by the cattle's action. The herd would become fretful and restless, and finally start drifting. If the herd was not held in check, the animals would drift to the river bottoms. With such event taking place, we would be compelled to do several days riding to separate the various brands and drive the animals back to their home grounds. During a sever storm there was danger that some of the herd would drift many miles away. Therefore, we always attempted to hold the cattle, but there were times we could not accomplish our purpose, and a stampede would take place.

"Of course, when the general roundups were held almost all the strays would be found.

"The general roundup was a cooperative move to gather all the cattle and separate the animals. A crew made up of members from all the camps worked under a roundup boss. In addition, the ranchers would send a representative to the distant roundups. This waddy's job was to watch for their strays that might have drifted [there?]. By this cooperative method the ranchers would get all their animals back on the home range twice each year.

"The cattle business had its problems as does every other business. To illustrate some of our problems, I shall relate some incidents of trouble. 13 "The ranchers in the Williamson camp territory had to meet a great loss in 1883, due to weather conditions. During the month of Feb., a snow, sleet and rain storm revalled for about 10 days. When the weather returned to normal, the range was covered with a coat of snow and ice, about four inches thick. This storm was very unusual and, of course, no one was able to meet the conditions produced by it. By the time the range cleared so the cattle could get at the grass, many

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cattle had died from exposure and starvation. It was estimated the loss suffered amounted to 50 percent of the herds.

When the weather became mild, bad matters was made worse by a heel-fly plague, which took another 10 percent or more of the cattle.

"The heel-fly attacks cattle in the heel and when one of the insects hits a critter in the hell the animal becomes crazed with fright and pain. The attacked animal will let out a bawl, throw its tail in the air, and start runnin for a water hole or a bog. There the cattle will remain. The fly is so wearing to the cattle that the animals will refrain from feeding, become weakened and [many?] will die.

"The weather condition which prevailed prior to the heel-fly plague, produced many [hoss?]. The cattle were already weakened due to rage conditions. Therefore, many went down in the [gogs?] and died there before we could haul the critters out.

"The conditions under which we raised cattle in those days, we did not have much invested in the herd, because our only cost 14 was for hired help. But, when a large precentage of the herd was lost, our sales had to be curtailed until the herd built back or purchases were made to replace the loss.

"The price of cattle in the early '80s ranged from \$20 to \$30 for twos and threes. Therefore, the loss of 500 to 1000 herd of cattle represented considerable money. Thus, you may estimate what the '83 storm and heel-fly plague cost the ranchers.

"During the early '80s the first wire fencing of the range appeared in Williamson co., After considerable fighting, fence cutting and court trials over the fencing, the system of fencing the range became the rule. Many of the large ranchers then moved [?] where the range was still open.

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"We had considerable trouble with the first fence in our Territory. The first fence was built by Taylor, and he put the fence up on his section line. Thus was absolutely within his rights. Some of the prominent citizens considered the act as detrimental to the welfare of the country. They preceived the disappearance of the open range and with it the cattle industry. Of course, those days the peoples livelihood came wholly from the cattle. Therefore, some of the citizens decided to save the country from ruination. These people formed in a mob and destroyed the fence. Taylor replaced the fence and again it was cut down.

"However, the [depredaters?] were caught in their second act of fence destroying. The culprits were arrested on a criminal charge and, also, had a civil action for damages filed against them.

"The cases were hard fought. The law was clearly against the defendants, but [to?] find a jury which would convict the accused 15 was a problem the courts could not solve. But, the civil action was more successful and the [were?] some judgments rendered in favor of Taylor. The result of the court action did, however, cause a cessation of the depredations against fences.

"What I have related is, I think, the prominent points of my experience during the early days on the range.

"Many changes have taken place since I were a boy. I use to ride over the beautiful prairie country on a hoss. The sage grass was about three feet high in most places. There were lots of prairie chickens and other game. Coyotes could be heard, during the night, anywhere one might be. I still have the mental sound of their yelp and howl. I can still hear the cyotes mournful howl and when I do it makes my flesh creep.

"There were no houses on the prairie, unless there was a good spring near by, like Crelry Wilson's spring W. of Taylorville, or Flag's spring E. of town. Flag's spring use to be the

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camp site of Caffle's cow camp. After the camp was moved W., John R Hone bought the tract of land containing the spring and built a magnificent home there.

"We had no automobiles, trucks, tractors or aeroplanes. No picture shows, telephones or radios. People [cooked?] in the fireplace or ovens built on the outside. There were a few stoves, for cooking and heating purposes, but these utensils were a rarity.

"People fought for their rights using the six-gun instead of 16 their hands or the courts. But, outside of the comparative few rustlers, a large percentage of the people were honest. People paid their bills with cash. They carried their money on their [?] person or layed/ it on the mantel in the home. When people went on a business, trip, they never worried about putting any sum of money in the saddle bag and travel through strange [or?] known territory.

"People, as a whole, trusted one another, and there was lots of brotherly love mixed with the shootings. As a whole people had a good time and were happy.

"I came to Fort Worth during the early '90s with my family to make it my home, but I am still in the cattle business. I operate a farm at Juntin, Texas, where I raise Herdfords as my principal [farming?] activity.